European Commission
Research Directorate General
Human Resources and Mobility

MARIE CURIE CONFERENCES AND TRAINING COURSES (SCF/LCF)

Reporting Guidance Notes

MARIE CURIE ACTIONS

08/10/2004
Version 1

This document is available on the Cordis web-site

FOREWORD

All Marie Curie actions rely on a systematic and **continuous** monitoring of **each** project in order to provide:

- guidance to the Project Officers (incl. independent experts) when following the project;
- warnings to the coordinators when significant deviations to the objectives of the project are observed;
- quantitative and qualitative analysis of the performance of the activities and of the programme;
- an up-to-date database of ***secondary opportunities***[*] for the benefit of the scientific community.

For the Marie Curie Conferences and Training Courses, the monitoring effort is split in 2 phases:

- Continuous assessment during the duration of the project via periodic activity and management reports, questionnaires, vacancy data, on site visits…
- Final assessment of the project at the end of the contract via final activity and management reports.

The monitoring of the contracts relies extensively on the data provided by the coordinators (activity and management reports and vacancy tool) and on the questionnaires completed by the event participants to the conference or training course. The coordinators play an essential role in providing a timely account of the progress of the project and by encouraging the participants in completing the questionnaires.

A fully electronic submission of project reports and deliverables (incl. questionnaires) described in this document is available on the Internet at http://webgate.cec.eu.int/sesam.

[*] For LCF/SCF this database consists of a list of projects and events supported by the action

CONTENTS

1 Introduction

The Reporting Guidance Notes consist of a review of the reports and of the deliverables which are submitted by the project coordinator on behalf of the consortium. This document provides guidance and instructions to assist the coordinators in preparing these reports and deliverables for Marie Curie Conferences and Training Courses (SCF/LCF). It also describes the procedure for their submission to the Commission.

These Guidance notes do not supersede the rules and conditions laid out, in particular, in Council and Parliament Decisions relevant to the Sixth Framework Programme, the relevant Specific Programme, the Rules for Participation, the Financial Regulation applicable to the general budget of the European Communities and its implementing rules or the contract and its annexes.

Periodic reports are required and must be submitted at the end of each period as defined in Article 6 (resp. 5) of the contract for SCF (resp. LCF).

- **The periodic activity report**: containing an overview of the activities carried out during the reporting period describes the progress in relation to the project objectives, the progress towards the milestones and deliverables set for the period, and any problems encountered and corrective actions taken.
- **The periodic management report** includes a detailed justification of the costs incurred and of the resources deployed by each contractor linking them to activities implemented and justifying their necessity, the **financial statements (Form C)** from each contractor (which may require an ***Audit certificate*[1]*)*** (see Annex 11) and a **summary financial report** consolidating the costs of the contractor(s).
- **The periodic report on the distribution of the Community's contribution** records the distribution of funding to each contractor during that period.
- **Supplementary periodic reports** may be required, as specified in the annexes to the contract.

Deliverables: The schedule of deliverables to be submitted to the Commission is specified in Annex I to the contract. They are approved as part of the periodic reviews of project progress.

Final reports: In addition to the periodic reports for the last reporting period, the consortium shall submit the following **final reports** to the Commission after the end of the project. These final reports cumulate and summarise the project's activity over its full duration.

- A **final activity report**, covering main aspects of the work, objectives, results and conclusions. It also includes a publishable summary.
- A **final management report** for the full duration of the project consolidating the claimed costs of all the contractors in an aggregate form covering the entire duration of the project and the final **summary financial report**.
- A **final report on the distribution of the Community's contribution** consolidating the funding distributed to each contractor over the entire duration of the project.
- **Supplementary reports** may be required, as specified in the contract annexes.

.[1] if provided for under Article 7.2 (resp. 5.2) of the contract for SCF (resp. LCF).

<u>Questionnaires:</u> The coordinator should take measures to ensure that the questionnaires referred to in Article III.2 are completed by the beneficiaries of the action.

- **Assessment questionnaire:** the coordinator should invite the event participants at the end of each conference or training course to complete the assessment questionnaires.

<u>Vacancy Tool:</u> The coordinator will need to keep up to date the details of the events organised, on the Marie Curie Funding Opportunities Search Tool, so called "Vacancy Tool", which is available at http://MC-opportunities.cordis.lu.

Other data requested by the Commission: Contractors are reminded of Article II.3.1.d of the contract – "The consortium/contractor shall provide all detailed data requested by the Commission for the purposes of the proper administration of this project".

Reports must be submitted in writing by means of registered mail with acknowledgement of receipt to the addresses given in Article 11 (resp. 9) of the contract for SCF (resp. LCF) and must also be delivered by electronic means, using the electronic submission system available at webgate.cec.eu.int/sesam.

Reports are delivered[2] and approved according to the following schedule:

Delivery	Delivery – Calendar days after end of period	Approval – Calendar days after arrival
Periodic activity report	45	Normally 45 (90=tacit approval)
Periodic management report	45	Normally 45
Periodic report on the distribution of the Community's contribution	45	N/A
Supplementary periodic reports	45	Normally 45
Deliverables	45	Normally with periodic reports
Final activity report	45[3]	Normally 45
Final management report	45[3]	Normally 45
Final report on the distribution of the Community's contribution	60[4]	N/A
Supplementary final reports	45	Normally 45

The Commission staff will review **periodic activity reports** within 45 days after reception. These reports will be deemed approved by the Commission if no comments or requests for changes and corrections are communicated to the consortium within 90 days after the receipt of each of these reports.

For all other reports, the Commission will review these within 45 days upon their reception. However <u>no tacit approval</u> is implied even if no response is received from the Commission within 45 days. The Commission reserves the right to reject such reports at any time, even after the 90 day interval for making the payment has expired.

[2] The Delivery deadlines are based on the time of arrival of the *paper* version
[3] May be extended to 90 days after the end of the project, if a substantiated request is made to the Project Officer
[4] Sixty days after receipt of final payment by the co-ordinator

2 Periodic reports

2.1 Periodic activity report

The activity report allows the Commission to monitor the contract, to compare the achievements of the project with its stated objectives and to justify the release of the pre-financing. To this end progress should be compared as far as possible with Annex I of the contract.

The Periodic activity report is submitted after each reporting period as defined by Article 6 (resp. 4) of the contract (normally once per year) for SCF (resp. LCF).

The report contains the following information and must be prepared in accordance with the template provided in Annex 1:

- Front page;
- List of the events organised by the contractors with details of the event participants;
- Profile of the participants attending the event;
- Description of the general progress of the project compared to the original work programme;
- Description of the scientific and technological highlights and milestones;
- Description of training and networking activities;
- Summary of research results (publications,, proceedings etc…).

2.2Periodic management report

The Periodic management report is submitted after each reporting period at the same time as the Periodic activity report.

The Periodic management report includes the following sections:

Section 1 - Justification of costs (see Annex 2)

- Management report: Origin and motivations for the costs, and in particular any deviations or modifications to the initial financial planning;
- Update of project deliverables;
- Update of financial planning.

The justification of the costs claimed should possess the following qualities that render the information useful to any reader, including the external auditor and the auditors of the Commission. Therefore, they must be:

Understandable: Excessive detail and overly complex reporting formats should be avoided. Information should be presented fully, but clearly and precisely.

Relevant: Relevant information is timely and covers the full nature and extent of the financial activities presented. Information is relevant if it helps those who use it to carry out their activities.

Reliable: Reliable information represents what it purports to represent. It is accurate, free from bias, complete and verifiable.

Timely: Information should reflect the most recent information available and front the period in question.

Consistent: Financial reporting should be presented on the same accounting basis, to the extent possible.

Comparable: The basis for accounting and presentation, and the effect of any changes from one period to the next, should be highlighted and clearly explained.

Material: Insignificant events may be disregarded, but there must be full disclosure of all important information. Therefore an item is material if its disclosure is likely to lead the user of accounting

Section 2 – Financial statement by activity for the contractual reporting period – by contractor (Form C) (see Annexes 3 and 4)
Provide for each contractor in the project the Form C Financial statement as set out in Annex VI to the contract. *(If special clause 23a has been used then financial statements from members of the organisation should also be provided and the summary financial statement from the contractor)***.**

Please note that:

The eligible costs declared by the contractors in Forms C must be declared in €. Therefore, costs incurred[5] in currencies other than € shall be reported in € on the basis of:

- the conversion rate that would have applied on the date that the actual costs were incurred

or

- the rate applicable on the first day of the month following the end of reporting period.

The relevant basis for the conversion rate used must be indicated by the contractor in Form C when submitting costs claims. The choice of one basis must be applied for the whole duration of the project. The conversation rates may be obtained at the following internet address: http://www.ecb.int/stats/eurofxref/ or in the relevant OJ of the European Union.

For instructions to contractors on the correct completion of the Form C see the Guide to financial issues.

Audit certificates are to be submitted with the Form C if required for this period in Article 7 (resp. 5) of the contract for SCF (resp. LCF) or for any contractor whose EC contribution is more than € 750,000 for the period. Audit certificates must front the costs incurred during all precedent periods for which audit certificates have not been provided. An example of model audit certificate is provided in Annex 11.

Section 3 – Summary financial report (see Annex 5)
Include a summary report of total (direct + indirect) costs in euros as claimed by each contractor and activity type, for the reporting period (i.e. a summary of the individual contractor's Form C information).

Note that for contractors subject to special clause 23a, a summary financial report must be provided consolidating data from contractors' and members' Form C.

2.3 Periodic report on the distribution of the Community's contribution

The Periodic report on the distribution of the Community' contribution is submitted after each reporting period (normally once per year, at the same time as the Periodic activity report. It shows

[5] As well as receipts.

the distribution (in euros [6]) of funds made by the coordinator to contractors during the reporting period, using the template provided. (See Annex 6).

2.4 Supplementary periodic reports

Any Supplementary reports which have been specified in any annex of the contract to be prepared at each periodic reporting period will also now be submitted.

All periodic reports described in Sub-sections 2.1-2.5 shall be submitted *at the same time* and within 45 days following the end of the reporting period in question.

[6] *not* thousands of euros

3 Project deliverables

A project deliverable represents a verifiable output of the project which is subject to review by the Commission. The deliverables and the timing of their submission are specified in Annex I to the contract.

Deliverables are often written reports but can also take another form, for example the completion of a prototype, the publishing of proceedings, etc. In such cases the deliverable should nevertheless also be documented in a written record of the achievement of the deliverable[7], including any available supporting material (e.g. photos of the prototype, the report of the conference….).

Deliverable are submitted to the Commission electronically and on paper as for project reports, unless otherwise specified in Annex I to the contract. Each deliverable has a standard front page (see Annex 7).

Deliverables should be submitted on the due date as specified in Annex I, with a maximum contractually permitted delay of 45 days after the end of the reporting period. Any delay in the submission of a deliverable must be reported in the Periodic activity report.

[7] In addition to being listed as an achieved deliverable in the Periodic activity reports

4 Final reports

At the end of the project, the coordinator shall submit the periodic reports for the last reporting period as at the close of all the previous periods.
In addition there are final reports to be provided covering the whole duration of the project.

The coordinator will submit the following overall reports: the final activity report (including a publishable summary), the final management report, the final report on the distribution of the Community's contribution, and any other supplementary reports as required by Annex I to the contract. The coordinator, on behalf of the consortium, must submit these final reports to the Commission, by electronic means using the electronic submission system available at webgate.cec.eu.int/sesam. and by registered mail, within 45 calendar days following the end of the last reporting period the following **final reports**.

4.1 Final activity report

The Final activity report is submitted at the same time as the last periodic activity report, i.e. 45 days of the end of the project. [8]
It cumulates and summarises the project activities and results over the full duration and includes a summary in a publishable format. The summary is of suitable quality to enable direct publication by the Commission. While not excluding technical language, it should be broadly comprehensible to an interested general reader. Coordinators are encouraged to read the Communications Guide from the RTD, which they will find at:
http://europa.eu.int/comm/research/conferences/2004/cer2004/pdf/rtd_2004_guide_success_communication.pdf

The Final activity report should be a consolidated text covering the whole period of the contract and demonstrating the achievements in relation to the initial objectives. In particular, the final report will include:

- Front page;
- Publishable summary of all work performed during the project;
- Description of the project achievements incl. scientific highlights, contact building and training activities, dissemination of results;
- Project evaluation.

The model Final activity report is provided in Annex 8. Note that for projects with one reporting period, the Periodic activity report is the Final activity report.

4.2 Final management report

The coordinator will also submit within 45 days of the end of the project a final management report consolidating the costs of all the contractors <u>taking into account any adjustments made by the Commission</u>, in an aggregate form covering the entire duration of the project. The format for this report is provided in Annex 9.

[8] May be extended to 90 days after the end of the project, if a substantial request is approved by the Project Officer.

4.3 Final report on the distribution of the Community's contribution

The coordinator will submit within 60 days after receipt of the final payment by the Commission a Final report on the distribution of the Community's contribution reporting the final, cumulative distribution of funds made to each contractor. The report shows the net payment made to each contractor over the entire duration of the project. The format for this report is the same as the format of the Periodic report on the distribution of the Community's contribution.

4.4 Supplementary final reports

Any Supplementary reports which have been specified in any annex of the contract to be prepared at the end of the project will also now be submitted.

4.5 Residual obligations

Contractors have a number of obligations which remain in force after the end of the project and the delivery of the final reports.

Contractors are required by Article II.10.1 of the contract to provide, at any time up to five years after the end of the project, any data necessary for:

- The continuous and systematic review of the Sixth Framework Programme and of the specific priority concerned
- The evaluation and impact assessment of funded activities

Such data may also be published by the Commission in the form of anonymous statistics.

The Commission or the Court of Auditors may also, according to Article II.26 (resp. II.25) of the contract for SCF (resp. LCF), at any time during the contract and up to five years after the end of the project, arrange for audits to be carried out, either by outside scientific or technological reviewers or financial auditors, or by the Commission departments themselves including OLAF[9]. Such audits may front scientific, financial, technological and other aspects (such as financial, accounting and management principles) relating to the proper execution of the project and the contract.

For these reasons, contractors are required by Article II.26.3 (resp. II.25.3) of the contract for SCF (resp. LCF) to keep all documentation relating to the contract for **up to five years** from the end of the project.

Contractors also remain bound to certain undertakings of confidentiality, as described in Article II.9 of the contract, and requirements concerning access rights (licences and user rights), as described in Article II.32 (resp. II.31) of the contract fro SCF (resp. LCF).

5 Questionnaires

The monitoring of the Conferences and Training Courses project relies extensively on a direct feedback from the funded and non funded participants in the events.

[9] Office européen de Lutte Anti-Fraude / European Anti-Fraud Office

The coordinator should invite the event participants at the end of the conference or training course to complete the assessment questionnaire. This questionnaire is designed to give the Commission some feedback on the overall impact of the event. It will contain personal information on the participant, and his evaluation of the event (programme content, quality of speakers, accommodation, etc.).
The assessment questionnaire is available as a web based application at webgate.cec.eu.int/sesam.
When logging in, the event participants will need to type the contract number. The coordinators should therefore communicate together with the URL address of the online submission system the 6-digit contract number to them.
The information requested in the questionnaire will be kept in strict confidence by the Commission and will mainly be used for assessing the level of satisfaction of the fellows.
The model assessment questionnaire is provided in Annex 10.

6 Vacancy Tool

The Vacancy Tool is an on-line search tool which allows researchers to find funding opportunities for attending conferences or training events, using a wide range of parameters. They can search according to date, discipline, country, type of Marie Curie action, or using a free text term.

The Vacancy Tool, also called the "Marie Curie Funding Opportunities Search Tool", can be found at http://MC-opportunities.cordis.lu.
Coordinators of a "Marie Curie Conferences & Training Courses" project are responsible for completing and maintaining the Vacancy Tool database on the Commission's website and to provide the detailed list of funding opportunities for participation in an event or course (see Article III.3 of the contract.)
The Vacancy Tool provides the following information for each Marie Curie Conferences and Training Courses project:
The project details (coordinator details, project summary);
The event details: to be encoded and maintained by the coordinator. These include the location, the duration, the number of grants available and the way to apply for participation in the event..
The data encoded in the vacancy tool should be used directly by the Commission for following the projects.

Project and event information will be accessible to the general public although only registered users will be able to create, modify or delete the event information.
On the homepage, by selecting 'Conferences' on the menu bar on the top of the screen, visitors are redirected to the **SCF/LCF search tool** for funding opportunities at conferences or training events, supported by the Marie Curie Conferences and Training Courses action (FP6).
Visitors can search for → events according to date, discipline or country,
→ projects by using a free text search.
The Event Details Page contains :

* The contract number;
* The conference title (project title);
* The event title and number;
* The event type;
* The date;
* The location;
* How to apply;
* The number of grants available (i.e. number of funding opportunities for attending the event);
* The discipline;
* The local organisation

The Project details Page contains:

* The number of events organised in the frame of the project;
* The contract number;
* The Project Title and Acronym;
* The research area (scientific discipline)
* The abstract (summary)
* The conference type;
* The name of the Contractor;
* The name and details of the Coordinator

The project details are extracted from the contract and can only be modified by the Commission services upon request by the coordinator.
However, the encoding and maintaining of event details by the coordinators is part of their reporting obligations.

How to modify the details of an event ?

Shortly after the signature of their contract by the Commission and the contractor, the coordinators receive an email (from mc-opportunities@cordis.lu) with a username and password which allows them to access the information of their **events** and to complete or modify the data.

- On the homepage (http://mc-opportunities.cordis.lu), select Project Coordinators Pages and fill in the username & password (you can change your password after having logged-in by clicking on Change User Details).
- You are redirected to the homepage where you can
  - Add an event : Some of the data are prefilled but can be modified.
  - List your data. Your project(s) will be displayed.
- - Click on the "Project Title" for which you wish to modify the data.
- - On the page "Project Details", click on List your events.
- - Select the "event" for which you wish to modify the data.
- - On the page "Event Details", you have several possibilities:

  * **Changing disciplines and adding one ore more subdisciplines** :

  Click on the button "Change Disciplines":

  The field "Discipline" has been prefilled with the scientific discipline corresponding to the evaluation panel. However, you may wish to link your project to a more accurate discipline, and we recommend you to do so.

  Indeed, the Vacancy Tool is linked to the Mobility Portal (url: http://europa.eu.int/eracareers/index_en.cfm), which is advertising training and mobility opportunities in Europe. One of the search filters in the Mobility Portal is the scientific discipline (research fields). The mapping of scientific disciplines corresponds to the mapping of scientific disciplines in the Vacancy Tool. When searching projects through the Mobility Portal, using the scientific discipline filter, the results will be based on the scientific discipline that has been entered in the Vacancy Tool.

  On the same page, you can add one ore more subdisciplines. These subdisciplines allow for a more refined search when they are filled in the "Free Text" box on the search page.

  Confirm your modifications by pressing the "Change Details" button.

* **Change the event details** by clicking on “Change these details”. By going in the relevant box, you can add or modify data, such as the name of the organiser (if you wish to indicate the name of the local organiser), the date or location of an event, the event title, etc.

  Please complete the "Deadline": this is the ultimate date when applications can be sent.

  “How to apply” : please modify if necessary.

  “Number of grants”: this is the sum of participants eligible for funding in groups 1, 2 & 3.

* **Delete an event** : please note that the result of this action is permanent

(*** Clone an event** : for Commission use only.)

7 Annexes (to be printed out separately)

Annex 1 – Periodic activity report

Annex 2 – Periodic management report

Annex 3 – Financial Statement Form C -
Multicontractor version

Annex 4 – Financial Statement Form C -
Monocontractor version (LCF only)

Annex 5 – Summary financial reports

Annex 6 – Report on the distribution of the Community's contribution

Annex 7 – Front page for Deliverables

Annex 8 – Final activity report

Annex 9 – Final management report

Annex 10 – Assessment Questionnaire

Annex 11 – Model for Audit certificates